

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for manipulating a broadcast signal, the method
2 comprising:
3 receiving the signal at a headend;
4 establishing a sliding-window time range of the signal that slides at
5 a playback rate as the signal is received; and
6 transmitting at least two streams from the headend, the at least two
7 streams being derived from the signal, and each stream originating from a
8 corresponding different playback point in the sliding-window time range.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein transmitting the at least two
2 streams further comprises:
3 transmitting substantially all of the sliding-window time range of the
4 signal from the headend to form a substantially continuous range of streams.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have
2 a destination, and wherein the method further comprises:
3 receiving the at least two streams at the destination; and
4 in response to a user at the destination selecting a desired stream of
5 the at least two streams, playing the desired stream at the destination.

1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have
2 a destination, and wherein the method further comprises:
3 receiving the at least two streams at an intermediate device;
4 in response to a user at the destination selecting a desired stream of
5 the at least two streams, unicasting the desired stream from the intermediate device
6 to the destination; and
7 playing the desired stream at the destination.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have
2 a plurality of destinations, and wherein transmitting the at least two streams further
3 comprises

4 multicasting the at least two streams from the headend, and wherein
5 the method further comprises:
6 receiving the at least two streams at the plurality of destinations; and
7 at each destination, in response to a user at that destination selecting
8 a desired stream of the at least two streams, playing the desired stream at that
9 destination.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have
2 a plurality of destinations, and wherein transmitting the at least two streams further
3 comprises:

4 multicasting the at least two streams from the headend, and wherein
5 the method further comprises:

6 receiving the multicasted at least two streams at a plurality of
7 intermediate devices;

8 at each destination, in response to a user at that destination selecting
9 a desired stream of the at least two streams, unicasting the desired stream from a
10 corresponding intermediate device to that destination; and
11 playing the desired stream at that destination.

1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein a current stream originating
2 at a current playback point is being received and played at the destination, the
3 method further comprising:

4 in response to a user at the destination requesting to pause,
5 incrementally switching from the current stream to a different stream of the at least
6 two streams that originates earlier in the sliding-window time range than the current
7 stream, and the incremental switching taking place at such a rate to cause the
8 playback point to remain substantially stationary in time; and

9 in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping
10 the incremental switching.

1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein a current stream originating
2 at a current playback point is being received and played at the destination, the
3 method further comprising:

1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein a current stream originating
2 at a current playback point is being received and played at the destination, the
3 method further comprising:
4 in response to a user at the destination requesting to fast-forward,
5 incrementally switching from the current stream to a different stream of the at least
6 two streams that originates later in the sliding-window time range than the current
7 stream, and the incremental switching taking place at such a rate to cause the
8 playback point to move forward in time; and
9 in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping
10 the incremental switching.

1 10. The method of claim 1 wherein the two streams have a
2 destination, and wherein the method further comprises:
3 in response to user at the destination selecting a desired stream of the
4 at least two streams, receiving the desired stream at the destination;
5 establishing a buffered storage queue at the destination; and
6 in response to a user selecting a desired position in the storage queue,
7 playing the desired stream at the destination from the desired position in the buffered
8 storage queue.

1 *Sruba*
2 comprising:
3 receiving the signal at a headend;
4 establishing a buffered storage queue at the headend that receives the
5 ~~signal; and~~

6 transmitting a stream from the headend, the stream being derived from
7 the signal, and the stream originating from a user selected playback point in the
8 buffered storage queue.

1 12. The method of claim 11 wherein transmitting the stream
2 further comprises:

3 unicasting a plurality of streams, each stream being derived from the
4 signal, and each stream originating from a corresponding user selected playback
5 point in the storage queue.

1 *Sub 02* 13. The method of claim 11 wherein the stream is being received
2 and played at the destination, the method further comprising:

3 in response to a user at the destination requesting to pause, sliding the
4 user selected playback point within the queue at such a rate to cause the playback
5 point to remain substantially stationary in time; and

6 in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping
7 the sliding.

1 14. The method of claim 11 wherein the stream is being received
2 and played at the destination, the method further comprising:

3 in response to a user at the destination requesting to rewind, sliding
4 the user selected playback point within the queue at such a rate to cause the playback
5 point to move backward in time; and

6 in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping
7 the sliding.

1 15. The method of claim 11 wherein the stream is being received
2 and played at the destination, the method further comprising:

3 in response to a user at the destination requesting to fast-forward,
4 sliding the user selected playback point within the queue at such a rate to cause the
5 playback point to move forward in time; and

6 in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping
7 the sliding.

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1 16. The method of claim 11 wherein the stream has a destination,
2 and wherein the method further comprises:
3 receiving the stream at the destination;
4 establishing a buffered storage queue at the destination that receives
5 the signal; and
6 in response to a user selecting a desired position in the destination
7 buffered storage queue, playing the stream at the destination from the desired
8 position in the destination buffered storage queue.

1 17. A system for manipulating a broadcast signal, the system
2 comprising:
3 a headend for receiving the signal, the headend being operative to
4 establish a sliding-window time range of the signal that slides at a playback rate as
5 the signal is received, and the headend being further operative to transmit at least
6 two streams from the headend, the at least two streams being derived from the
7 signal, and each stream originating from a corresponding different playback point
8 in the sliding-window time range.

1 *Sub a3* 18. A system for manipulating a broadcast signal, the system
2 comprising:
3 a headend for receiving the signal, the headend being operative to
4 establish a buffered storage queue at the headend, and the headend being further
5 operative to transmit a stream from the headend, the stream being derived from the
6 signal, and the stream originating from a user selected playback point in the buffered
7 storage queue.